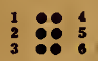
SPECIAL BRAILLE EDITION

MY WEEKLY READER

This Special Braille Edition has been prepared in order that seeing children may better understand how their blind friends read and write. The explanatory pages 1-7 are included in this edition for the special benefit of those who may want to learn the Braille system and more about the education of blind children. All of the other pages are taken from a regular Braille Edition.

The Braille System

Braille is a system of embossed characters formed by using combinations of six dots in a Braille cell arranged thus:



These dots are numbered, and each dot is known by its number. By means of various combinations of these six dots, all of the letters of the alphabet, plus punctuation and composition signs, can be written.

Braille books and magazines are very large because of the space required for printing. To save space, many words in Braille are contracted, and even abbreviated. Thus, a blind boy or girl has to learn that while a special Braille character is used to write such a common word as "the," the word is actually spelled "t-h-e."

In order that you may see just what Braille letters and word-signs look like, there is printed here in ink the Braille alphabet, punctuation and composition signs, and the contractions and abbreviations used in this Braille edition of your magazine.

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HOUSE FOR THE BLIND

ALPHABETICAL INDEX OF BRAILLE SIGNS

(Taken from "English Braille, American Edition — 1959"; Revised, 1969)

ALPHABET AND NUMERALS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0
a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j
⠁	⠃	⠉	⠙	⠑	⠋	⠛	⠓	⠊	⠚
k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t
⠅	⠇	⠍	⠝	⠕	⠏	⠟	⠗	⠎	⠞
u	v	w	x	y	z				
⠥	⠧	⠺	⠭	⠽	⠵				

The capital sign ⠠ (dot 6), placed before a letter makes it a capital.

The number sign ⠼ (dots 3-4-5-6), placed before a character, makes it a numeral and not a letter.

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CONTRACTIONS, WORD SIGNS, AND SHORT-FORM WORDS

A

about	ab
above	abv
according	ac
across	acr
after	af
afternoon	afn
afterward	afw
again	ag
against	agst
ally	⠠⠽
almost	alm
already	alr
also	al
although	alth
altogether	alt
always	alw
ance	⠨⠑
and	⠯
ar	⠜
as	⠵
ation	⠠⠝

B

bb	⠆
be	⠆
because	bec
before	bef
behind	beh
below	bel
beneath	ben
beside	bes
between	bet
beyond	bey
ble	⠼
blind	bl
braille	brl
but	⠃
by	⠴

C

can	⠉
cannot	⠸⠉
cc	⠒
ch	⠡
character	⠐⠡
child	⠡
children	chn
com	⠤
con	⠒
conceive	concv
conceiving	concvg
could	cd

D

day	⠐⠙
dd	⠲
deceive	dcv
deceiving	dcvg
declare	dcl
declaring	dclg
dis	⠲
do	⠙

E

ea	⠂
ed	⠫
either	ei
en	⠢
ence	⠰⠑
enough	⠢
er	⠻
ever	⠐⠑
every	⠑

F

father	⠐⠋
ff	⠖
first	fst
for	⠿
friend	fr
from	⠋
ful	⠰⠇

G

gg	⠶
gh	⠣
go	⠛
good	gd
great	grt

H

had	⠸⠓
have	⠓
here	⠐⠓
herself	herf
him	hm
himself	hmf
his	⠦

I

immediate	imm
in	⠔
ing	⠬
into	⠔⠖
it	⠭
its	xs
itself	xf
ity	⠰⠽

J

just	⠚

K

know	⠐⠅
knowledge	⠅

L

less	⠨⠎
letter	lr
like	⠇
little	ll
lord	⠐⠇

M

many	⠸⠍
ment	⠰⠞
more	⠍
mother	⠐⠍
much	mch
must	mst
myself	myf

N

name	⠐⠝
necessary	nec
neither	nei
ness	⠰⠎
not	⠝

O

o'clock	o'c
of	⠷
one	⠐⠕
oneself	onef
ong	⠰⠛
ou	⠳
ought	⠐⠳
ound	⠨⠙
ourselves	ourvs
ount	⠨⠞
out	⠳
ow	⠪

P

paid	pd
part	⠐⠏
people	⠏
perceive	percv
perceiving	percvg
perhaps	perh

Q

question	⠐⠟
quick	qk
quite	⠟

R

rather	⠗
receive	rcv
receiving	rcvg
rejoice	rjc
rejoicing	rjcg
right	⠐⠗

S

said	sd
sh	⠩
shall	⠩
should	shd
sion	⠨⠝
so	⠎
some	⠐⠎
spirit	⠸⠎
st	⠌
still	⠌
such	sch

T

th	⠹
that	⠞
the	⠮
their	⠸⠮
themselves	themvs
there	⠐⠮
these	⠘⠮
this	⠹
those	⠘⠹
through	⠐⠹
thyself	thyf
time	⠐⠞
tion	⠰⠝
to	⠖
today	td
together	tgr
tomorrow	tm
tonight	tn

U

under	⠐⠥
upon	⠘⠥
us	⠥

V

very	⠧

W

was	⠴
were	⠶
wh	⠱
where	⠐⠱
which	⠱
whose	⠘⠱
will	⠺
with	⠾
word	⠘⠺
work	⠐⠺
world	⠸⠺
would	wd

Y

you	⠽
young	⠐⠽
your	yr
yourself	yrf
yourselves	yrvs

PUNCTUATION AND COMPOSITION SIGNS

accent sign	⠈
apostrophe ’	⠄
asterisk *	⠔⠔
bar /	⠌
bracket (or brace) [opening	⠠⠶
bracket (or brace)] closing	⠶⠄
capital sign, single	⠠
capital sign, double	⠠⠠
colon :	⠒
comma ,	⠂
dash —	⠤⠤
dash, double ——	⠤⠤⠤⠤
decimal point .	⠨
ellipsis . . .	⠄⠄⠄
exclamation point !	⠖
fraction-line / or —	⠌
hyphen -	⠤
italic sign, single	⠨
italic sign, double	⠨⠨
letter sign	⠰
number sign #	⠼
parenthesis, opening (	⠶
parenthesis, closing)	⠶
period .	⠲
question mark ?	⠦
quotation mark, double, “ opening	⠦
quotation mark, double, ” closing	⠴
quotation mark, single, ‘ opening	⠠⠦
quotation mark, single, ’ closing	⠴⠄
semicolon ;	⠆
termination sign	⠠⠄

In addition to being able to write ordinary books and magazines, the Braille system of six embossed dots can also be used to write musical scores, mathematical and chemical notations, and other technical matter, as well as foreign languages. Blind boys and girls read and write in much the same manner as seeing boys and girls, except that you read with your eyes and they read with their fingers, running them lightly over the raised dots.

When a blind child wishes to write a letter to a blind friend or to do his lessons, instead of using a pencil and paper he may use a slate and stylus and special paper. This slate consists of a steel frame and guide, generally 8½" by 2", in which the paper is inserted ready for writing. The actual writing is done by means of a steel pin, or stylus, which has a knob on the end with which to hold it. This stylus is used to punch out the Braille dots by hand.

Blind boys and girls also use Braillewriters when they wish to do their work much faster. A Braillewriter is a small machine, very much like a typewriter, but it has six keys which represent the six dots of a Braille cell. By using one of these machines, instead of punching each separate dot by hand, whole Braille characters can be written at one time by pressing down several keys at once.

The Education of the Blind

Most blind children attend special schools for the blind or public schools in their own cities. Forty-one states have residential schools which are like free boarding schools. Some states have two schools, and those states which have no such school pay a tuition for their children to attend schools in other states. About 7,000 children attend these schools during the school year and go home for holidays and vacation.

There are about 2,100 blind boys and girls being educated in public and private non profit schools. They may be in a special class with a specially trained teacher or in a regular class with the services of a resource or itinerant teacher to whom they go during the day for instruction in Braille and typewriting or special help in school subjects. This special teacher also sees that each blind pupil has Braille books which are like the print books his classmates are using.

The United States Government provides money through the American Printing House for the Blind for the provision of books and educational aids used by blind children in residential schools for the blind, as well as private and public schools for the sighted.

Blind boys and girls study the same subjects as sighted children whether they are in a residential school or public school. Pupils are assisted in their studies by the use of special aids in subjects such as arithmetic, geography, music, and physical education. Some of these aids include rulers with raised lines and Braille indicators, raised line boards and paper for the construction of figures used in geometry and higher mathematics, and a kit which illustrates types of plays and position of players in popular team games. Detailed map work is done with relief maps on which a blind child can trace rivers and find lakes, mountains, and large cities. Some maps are dissected, or cut into pieces like a puzzle, so the child can take them apart and feel the actual shape of each state or country.

In some schools much emphasis is placed on vocational training and special subjects to insure the blind boy or girl of the capability of being a responsible and self-supporting citizen of his community. Blind children are encouraged to participate in physical education, shop and crafts, and home living skills. Typewriting is begun very early by a blind child so he will have a way of preparing his lessons and writing messages his family and friends can read.

Literature for the Blind

Since virtually every type of written material can be reproduced in Braille, it is possible to publish a wide variety of books and magazines bringing pleasure to many blind persons who like to read. Braille books are, however, too large and too expensive to be owned by many individual blind people. Large free circulating libraries have been established by the Library of Congress throughout the country, and people who read Braille may borrow their books from these libraries. There are about fifty-five distributing libraries for the blind, so the reader cannot always go to the library to pick out and borrow his book. Instead, he simply writes to his nearest Regional Library for the Blind and requests that the book be sent to him through the mail. Braille books are carried through the United States Mails postage free.

Braille is not the only method of reading used by the blind. There are also Talking Books which are long-playing phonograph records on which have been recorded books and magazines such as The Reader's Digest. These records are played on special phonograph machines called Talking Book machines. The records are circulated free to the blind through the same library service as for Braille books. Many of these records are purchased, from the American Printing House for the Blind by blind individuals.

Fingers That See

Did you ever shut your eyes and run your fingers over a page of Braille printing? All the little raised dots seemed to run together. Even if you knew the Braille alphabet, your fingers could not pick out each separate dot. But the boys and girls who cannot see read stories in Braille. Their fingers are trained to be their eyes.

A Frenchman, Louis Braille, made it possible for those who cannot see, to read. When he was a small boy, he used to play around his father's harness shop. One day, he was trying to punch holes in a piece of leather with the big awl on the workbench. The tool slipped and hurt Louis's eye. Before long, he became blind.

When Louis was ten years old, he was sent to a

school for the blind in Paris. There he began to study music and learned to play the organ. He became a very fine musician.

Louis Braille wanted more than just fame for himself. He wanted to help all those who could not see. So he set to work to find an alphabet which could be read with the fingers. Today that system of writing is known as Braille.

Many books and magazines are printed in Braille for boys and girls. Every week, the American Printing House for the Blind in Louisville, Kentucky, prints Braille copies of newspapers, such as Current Events, Know Your World, You and Your World, Current Science, and the Weekly Readers.